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THE ADVENTURER

BY ALICE BROWN

I

His birthright is to hear unendingly
The rote of breakers on some nameless shore,
The din of savage warfare and the roar
Of strange beasts mocking the unmindful sea;
The perils hid in water, cave and tree
Are wild delights he lives but to explore
Fast on each track of wonder, to the door
Of threatening, unguessed hazards yet to be.
Intrepid voyager! now is he confined
Within a world restricted, charted, known,
The far obscure illumed for all to find,
The seeds of strangeness in set borders sown,
And but rehearsed adventures of the mind
For fiery witness to bright dangers flown.

II

Spurning the vanquished earth, he flies to air,
Some red horizon now his coast of gold,
And, unappalled by lightning, sleet and cold,
He sails the sunrise and the morning star;
The void is his, her shifting gulfs, and far
Outrunning wild belief, he sees unrolled
Cloud ranges, peak and valley, fold on fold,
And cleaves the turmoil of the winds at war.
Imperious earth! his godhead flaming high,
She plucks him downward for that desperate flight
Of lone mortality, ordained to die
The body's death, and through her rayless night
Bids his clear spirit seek beyond her sky
The rose of beauty and the founts of light.